

Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Board Agenda
Wednesday, June 24, 2026
Generated by Raina George

1. CALL TO ORDER OF THE MINI CONVENTION:

Dr. Pushchak reported that the Board of Directors met in Executive session prior to the board meeting to review the Annual Safety and Security Report and to discuss legal matters.

The Mini-Convention of the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Board was called to order by Dr. Andrew Pushchak, President, at 5:46 p.m.

It was moved by Mr. Vrenna and seconded by Mrs. Bolte that the following district board members be appointed to serve on the Intermediate Unit Board July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2029:

1. Mrs. Amanda Cox, Corry Area School District
3. Mrs. Fran New, Fairview School District
4. Mr. Scott Taylor, Fort LeBoeuf School District
5. Dr. Jane Blystone, North East School District

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

It was moved by Dr. Blystone and seconded by Mrs. New to approve the 2026-2027 school year Slate of Officers as presented.

President	Dr. Andrew Pushchak, Wattsburg Area School District
Vice - President	Mr. Paul Mangione, Warren County School District
Treasurer	Ms. Jodie Binney

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

2. Meeting Opening:

A. Call Board Meeting to Order:

The Board meeting of the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Board was called to order by Dr. Andrew Pushchak, President, at 5:50 p.m.

Dr. Pushchak reported that the Board of Directors met in Executive session prior to the board meeting to review the Annual Safety and Security Report.

B. Roll Call:

Present were: Dr. Jane Blystone (NE); Kristy Bolte (NW); Amanda Cox (CR); Randy Styborski (PC); Paul Mangione (WC); Joseph Meka (GR); Fran New (FV); Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB); George Roberts (GM); Tammy Silvis (CC); Scott Taylor (FLB); Kimberle Thomas (UC); David Vrenna (HC);

Absent were: Gwendolyn Cooley (EC); Jennifer Sheldon (IR); Gary Winschel (MC); Ed Williamson (CN)

Present from the Intermediate Unit Leadership Team: Brad Whitman, Executive Director; Sally Daehnke; Becca Kelley; Kirk Shimshock; JT Stewart; Amanda Porter

Also present: Solicitor Pat Kennedy; Sara Boyd; Jill Lewis

C. Moment of Silence: Dr. Pushchak asked those in attendance to stand for a moment of silence.

D. Pledge to the Flag: Dr. Pushchak led everyone present in the Pledge to the Flag.

E. Recognition of PSEA: Dr. Pushchak recognized all PSEA Representatives.

F. Recognition of Visitors: Dr. Pushchak welcomed all visitors in attendance.

3. Reports:

A. Executive Director (Mr. Brad Whitman):

IU5

The 4th Annual C.L.A.S.S. Act Banquet was held on June 18, 2026. The final scholarship recipient for the 2025–26 school year was Nikaylin Higley from the Union City Area School District.

Federal and State Programs

The Federal and State Programs Department is very busy throughout the summer months:

- o The Adult Education team held a GED Graduation for the 2025-26 IU5 class on June 18, 2026, at PennWest University. 36 GEDs were attained this fiscal year, an all-time high for the program. Over 100 were in attendance celebrating this milestone for the graduates.
- o SUN Meals: Within the first two weeks of operation, the program has delivered over 33,500 meals to a dozen sites within Crawford and Erie Counties.
- o Migrant Education Program: The Migrant Education Program is busy running summer school opportunities for students across our 30 counties, rewriting our grant application where we are expecting to have a 2026-27 allocation of over \$1,400,000, up \$300,000 from last year, as well as filling any program vacancies.
- o The Upward Bound Math & Science Program is in week 2 of their 6-week camp at Penn State Behrend.

Human Resources

July 1, 2025, through June 23, 2026:

- 90 requisitions were entered to hire staff (some requisitions were for multiple positions – not all requisitions resulted in hiring staff, some were people bidding into positions and some we simply couldn't fill)
 - o 1,075 applications received
 - o 937 of those were qualified
 - o 138 of those were not qualified
- Of the candidates contacted:
 - o 30 were non-responsive
 - o 35 were no-shows to interviews – ghosted!
 - o 3 declined interviews
 - o 41 withdrew their applications
 - o 20 declined offers
- We onboarded 75 new hires in this timeframe
 - o 60 regular staff
 - o 15 contracted staff

School Improvement Services

- The new education facilitator started last week.
- We are currently working on facilitating the compilation of the IU's comprehensive plan.
- A principal networking session has been scheduled for July 20th. The focus will be on structured literacy and the impact building and district leaders have on the implementation of research based instructional practices.

Special Education

- We wrapped up the year with a classroom count of 238 students served in our institution and consortium classrooms. We started the year with 200 students.
- Our ELECT program served a total number of 81 students for the school year.
- The Local Task Force meeting schedule has been set for the 26-27 school year. Dr. Carol Clancy will be joining us for the September meeting.
- Access staff and directors are working together to map the process for medical billing. The process will take several months. The goal is to understand the process and look for ways to better support staff and school districts.

State

PA School Districts Face Rising Special Education Costs As Federal Funding Falls Short As school districts across Pennsylvania finalize their budgets, many are facing difficult financial decisions tied to the rising cost of special education services. Educators and school leaders say growing enrollment, increasingly complex student needs, years of federal underfunding and recent cuts to federal special education programs are putting pressure on local budgets and taxpayers.

Read the rest of the story: ["PA School District Face Rising Special Education Costs As Federal Funding Falls Short"](#) (Fox 43, 6-4-26)

Shapiro administration begins first distribution of \$103 million in SUN Bucks funding to feed children over summer break The Shapiro Administration began distributing \$103 million in summer food assistance benefits for eligible children as part of the SUN Bucks program, a federally funded summer benefit that helps families have fresh food and groceries while schools are closed. [Read More](#)

Lawmakers urge PA Senate to split up public, private high school playoffs House Bill 41, first introduced by Rep. Scott Conklin (D-Centre), would give the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) the legal authority to make changes to its playoff structure. [Read More](#)

Federal

This week, the U.S. Department of Education announced two new interagency agreements that would move key education offices and functions outside of ED. The first agreement would shift day-to-day management of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The second agreement would embed the Office for Civil Rights and the Office of Student Privacy and Protection within the U.S. Department of Justice. Read about these interagency agreements on [The Leading Edge blog](#).

Layoff Warnings Hit Thousands of School Employees Seven of the nation's 10 largest districts plan staff cuts as funding runs out and enrollment keeps falling. [Read More](#)

Education Department Moves Special Ed. and Civil Rights to Other Agencies The transfers mark the latest round of the Trump administration outsourcing Ed. Dept. programs. [Read More](#)

Ed Department Would See 10% Budget Cut Under House Committee Plan The U.S. Department of Education would see a 10% cut in funding for fiscal year 2027 with a funding reduction for low-income schools and a slight boost for special education spending, under a bill approved Tuesday by a Republican majority on the House Appropriations Committee. The bill, which now heads to the full House, recommends \$71 billion for the Education Department, down from \$79 billion this fiscal year. [Read More](#)

House Subcommittee Advances FY27 Education Funding Proposal This morning, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies advanced its Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 funding proposal. This funding would be available for districts in the 27-28 school year. While not as drastic as the prior year's proposal, House Republican leadership, who wrote the bill without consulting Democrats on the Committee, once again propose significant cuts to most K-12 funding. More details on [The Leading Edge blog](#).

New Proposed OMB Rules Would Impact LEAs The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has proposed new revisions to the Uniform Grants Guidance, which dictates the terms under which federal awards must be managed, as well as how and when they can be granted and rescinded. These changes will impact LEAs as well as many other recipients of federal funding. More on what this means for schools on [The Leading Edge blog](#).

New Department of Education Guidance Emphasize Local Flexibility The U.S. Department of Education (ED) issued two new "Dear Colleague" letters on Tuesday, emphasizing existing funding flexibility in Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Similar to other ESEA guidance published by ED over the last year, the letters do not establish any new requirements or flexibility but rather encourage States and local educational agencies (LEAs) to take advantage of flexibility permitted under existing law. Read both letters and our breakdown on [The Leading Edge blog](#).

Surgeon General Issues Advisory on Screen Time Last week, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released a new advisory on children's screen use. The HHS report is technically an advisory that makes recommendations, but stops short of having legal impact. [Warning on the Harms of Screen Use](#) is a toolkit intended to guide decision making and has a focus on specific aspects of excessive/unstructured screen time, especially social media, entertainment content, and cellphone use. Top level takeaways on [The Leading Edge blog](#).

School Budgets Are Under Pressure Nationwide. Here's What's Driving The Cuts School districts are under pressure this year. Some of the largest in the country are handing out pink slips. Cancelling technology contracts. And even slashing specific medications from employee health plans. As many school boards debate their budgets for the upcoming school year, a Chalkbeat analysis found a common thread: More than half of the country's 50 largest school districts are poised to or already have made cuts, or are facing a reported deficit. [Read More](#)

Quote:

"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future." — John F. Kennedy

B. Solicitor (Ms. Patricia Kennedy): Ms. Kennedy reported that she will be in contact with solicitor at Knox Law regarding the class action suit.

C. Executive Committee (Dr. Andrew Pushchak): Dr. Pushchak reported that the Executive Committee met on June 17, 2026, at 10:00 am to review the board agenda. Dr. Jane Blystone, Mr. Paul Mangione, and Dr. Andrew Pushchak were present.

D. Budget & Audit Committee (Mr. Paul Mangione): Mr. Paul Mangione, Chairperson, reported that the Budget & Audit Committee met on June 24, 2026 at 5:30 pm. Mr. Mangione reported that the Committee reviewed the Audit schedule.

E. Personnel Committee (Dr. Jane Blystone): Dr. Blystone, Chairperson, reported that the Personnel Committee met on June 24, 2026 at 5:30 pm. Dr. Blystone reported that there are five items on the agenda for approval.

F. Policy Committee (Mrs. Fran New): Mrs. Fran New, Chairperson, reported that the Policy Development Committee met on June 24, 2026 at 5:30 pm. There are no policies for review.

4. Minutes:

It was moved by Mrs. New and seconded by Mrs. Bolte to approve Minutes from the May 27, 2026 IU Board of Directors Meeting as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. IU5 Assistant Board Secretary Appointment:

It was moved by Mrs. Bolte and seconded by Mr. Taylor to approve the IU5 Assistant Board Secretary as presented.

A. Appointment of Emily Douglass as Assistant Board Secretary

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

6. Hearing Officer for Challenge of Records:

It was moved by Dr. Blystone and seconded by Mrs. New to approve the Hearing Officer for Challenge of Records as presented.

A. Appointment of Dr. Dean Maynard as Hearing Officer for Challenge of Records Hearing

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

7. Resolution for Filing Applications:

It was moved by Mrs. Bolte and seconded by Mr. Vrenna to approve the Filing for Applications as presented.

A. Approval for Filing of Applications and Contracts for the 2026-2027 School Year

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

8. Financial Items (Mr. Paul Mangione):

It was moved by Mr. Mangione and seconded by Mrs. New to approve Financial Items 8A-8I as presented.

A. Designate FNB (First National Bank) as Depository for 26-27

B. Designate PNC, PLGIT, PSDLAF, First National Bank, and Northwest Savings Bank as Investment Institutions

C. Treasurer's Report for May 31, 2026

D. Investment Report for May 31, 2026

E. May 2026 Monthly Revenue Board Report

F. May 2026 Monthly Expense Board Report

G. PNC Easy Procure Payments as of May 25, 2026

H. Approval of Bills

I. Approval of PDE 2026-2027 Transportation Budget

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

9. Personnel Items (Dr. Jane Blystone):

It was moved by Dr. Blystone and seconded by Mrs. Bolte to approve Personnel Items 9A-9E as presented.

- A. Resignation
- B. Retirement
- C. Tenures
- D. Employment of Personnel
- E. Position Additions and Changes

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

10. Transportation:

It was moved by Mrs. New and seconded by Mrs. Bolte to approve Transportation Items 10A-10B as presented.

- A. 2025-26 Special Needs Drivers
- B. 2025-26 Transportation Contracts

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

11. Contracted Payroll:

It was moved by Mr. Vrenna and seconded by Mrs. Bolte to approve Contracted Payroll 11A - 11J as presented.

- A. Ilona Burd
- B. Pamela Burdick
- C. Toni Daniel
- D. Nardluz Garcia
- E. Alejandra Garibay
- F. Kedysha Jeanty
- G. Nancy Mack
- H. Minerva Medina
- I. Mark Pacileo
- J. Christina Skelly

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

12. Service Purchase Contracts:

It was moved by Dr. Blystone and seconded by Mrs. New to approve Contracted Payroll 12A - 12E as presented.

- A. Erie's Public Schools SPC 71359
- B. Erie's Public Schools SPC 71360
- C. Erie's Public Schools SPC 71361
- D. Erie's Public Schools SPC 71362

E. Erie's Public Schools SPC 71363

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

13. Agreements/Contracts/Memorandum of Understandings:

It was moved by Mrs. New and seconded by Mrs. Bolte to approve Agreements and Contracts 13A-13O as presented.

- A. Charleroi Area School District MOU
- B. Charter School of Excellence- Special Education Contract
- C. Conneaut Area School District - Special Education Contract
- D. Early Intervention Plan Assurances 2026-27
- E. General McLane School District - Special Education Contract
- F. Girard School District - Special Education Contract
- G. Intermediate Unit 1 MOU
- H. North East School District - Special Education Contract
- I. Oil City Public Library MOU (Amended)
- J. PSBA Policy Services Agreement
- K. Talent LMS Agreement
- L. TruNorth Security Services Agreement
- M. Union City Area School District - Special Education Contract
- N. Warren County School District - Special Education Contract
- O. Wattsburg Area School District LIEP

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

14. Lease:

It was moved by Mr. Vrenna and seconded by Mrs. Bolte to approve Lease 14A as presented.

- A. Community College of Erie County Sublease

Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote Dr. Jane Blystone (NE) yes; Kristy Bolte (NW) yes; Gwendolyn Cooley (EC) absent; Amanda Cox (CR) yes; Paul Mangione (WC) yes; Joseph Meka (GR) yes; Fran New (FV) yes; Dr. Andrew Pushchak (WB) yes; George Roberts (GM) yes; Jennifer Sheldon (IR) absent; Tammy Silvis (CC) yes; Randy Styborski (PC) yes; Scott Taylor (FL) yes; Kimberlee Thomas UC) yes; David Vrenna (HC) yes; Ed Williamson (CN) absent; Gary Winschel (MC) absent

15. Other Business

Dr. Pushchak informed everyone the next Board meeting will be held on August 26, 2026.

16. Adjournment

It was moved by Mrs. New and seconded by Mrs. Bolte to adjourn the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit Board of Directors at 6:01 p.m.



Raina George, Board Secretary